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# Why joy in education is an issue for socially just policies

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## Abstract

The paper presents an argument that the usual account of social justice in formal education is too narrow. That account concerns itself only with the outcomes of education or only with general ethical precepts, such as 'recognition'. I argue that it should also concern itself with living educational experiences as part of what makes a good life. I begin by noting that people find value in education for three linked but analytically separable reasons which I label: instrumental, inherent and integral. The last of these focuses on the value of education as part of what it is to live a good life. I point out how the usual accounts of social justice in education are seldom concerned with specifically educational experiences within formal education and that there is little clarity about the contribution of such experiences to living a good life. I offer a provisional account of specifically educational goods in experiences of education, and compare this to research and policy on enjoyment and engagement concluding that the significance of joy in education should be recognised within education policy.

## Introduction

The paper presents an argument that the usual account of social justice in formal education is too narrow. That account concerns itself only with the outcomes of education or only with general ethical precepts, such as 'recognition'. I argue that it should also concern itself with living educational experiences as part of what makes a good life. My argument is as follows. (1) I begin by noting that people find value in education for three linked but analytically separable reasons. The *instrumental* benefits of formal education is one reason. The second reason is what Hogan usefully terms *inherent*, focused on the future production of educated persons. The third is what I term *integral* focused on educational experiences in the present. Both of the last two are intrinsic reasons to value education, that is they are concerned with what is specifically educational about formal education. (2) I outline the usual account of social justice in education as concerned with distribution, recognition and association

and with a range of overlapping social groups, marked by gender, ethnicity, sexuality, social class and so forth. This is an account which I support and to which I have contributed. (3) I go on to point out that only some of these concerns are focused on social justice in the present experiences of education, and fewer, if any, on the integral reasons for valuing education. Social justice concerns about the present experience of formal education are usually not specific to educational practices. This, I suggest, indicates a gap in the analysis. In order to understand what is at stake I examine one example of a social justice concern: attainment and social class in Scotland. I conclude that in determining what is at issue, it is necessary to be clear about the integral good of education, as well as about its outcomes. In the following section (4) I outline an account of lived experiences of education as a good in themselves, concluding that the joys and delights of educational experiences need to be clarified. (5) I begin an exploration of educational joys and delights, drawing some provisional conclusions which I compare with recent research into enjoyment of, and engagement in, formal education. (6) There are clear policy implications, especially as some recent education policy in the UK and the EU pays attention to enjoyment, engagement and personal fulfilment. I argue that almost all of these policies are ambiguous about what is proposed, and suggest ways in which they might be sharpened in order to give more of us the chance of including education as part of a good life.

### **(1) The three-fold value of formal education**

The reasons that individuals and governments find value in formal education relate both to outcomes and to the processes, the experiences, of being in education. I distinguish three main reasons. *Firstly*, individuals may value their formal education as instrumental in giving them an entry into some desired occupation, status or role. The education they must undergo to get there is then perceived as a series of (more or less pleasurable and interesting) hurdles such as exams to pass, facts to be memorised, skills to demonstrate and institutions to attend. Through the ages and all over the world, some clever boys and men (and a very few girls and women) born in relative poverty, oppression and/or low status have been able to use education as one means to attaining riches, power and/or high status. These are extrinsic reasons: desired occupations, status, power and riches can be – and have been – achieved in other ways. *Secondly*, formal education may be valued in so far as it cultivates valued outcomes in an individual, such as autonomy, citizenship, imagination and critical

thinking, all of which are significant for the establishment of cohesive, democratic and free societies. This kind of value lies behind calls for liberal education; in the influential German language tradition it can be found in *Bildung*. It tends to be focused on the formal education of young persons. Pádraig Hogan (2010) has usefully termed this an inherent purpose of education, because, in contrast to the first, it is an intrinsic reason. The purpose cannot be achieved in other ways. *Thirdly*, another intrinsic reason focuses on the present rather than on the future (e.g. in Sheppard, 2011). The two intrinsic reasons are not usually clearly distinguished from each other. So it is necessary to use somewhat unusual terminology. In what follows I shall use Hogan's term, 'inherent' for intrinsic reasons oriented to the future, and 'integral' for intrinsic reasons oriented to the present. In the discussion that follows, I have used the term, 'education', for all of these, extrinsic and intrinsic, and reserved 'educational' for intrinsic reasons.

Integral reasons exist because education may be seen as good in itself, as part of what makes a good life good, not just as part of what is needed to produce a good life. And here the experience, the process, is significant. Aristotle argued convincingly that the good life is experienced as pleasurable as well as being good, and further that pleasure is significant in the educational processes of coming to understand:

Understanding is extremely pleasant, not just for philosophers, but for others too... people take delight in seeing images: what happens is that as they view them they come to understand and work out what each thing is. (Aristotle, 1995a, 48b)

It is significant that Aristotle is writing in the context of goodness, harmony and beauty, so he is referring to the particular kind of pleasures that accrue to living the good life (Rorty, 1974).

The relation between these three positions is complex. In some respects they are opposed. The first, narrowly instrumental, position views the purpose of education as a means to a pre-determined objective. The second, liberal position, like the instrumental one, is focused on the outcomes but those outcomes are broadly defined. They cannot be determined in advance because they evolve as a result of the processes of education. The third, more experiential, position, unlike the other two, is

not concerned with long term outcomes, but rather with present educational experiences in formal education.

In other respects the three positions are linked. The first two are both concerned with the value of the long term outcomes of education, be that a better job or a better person. Both of these outcomes may be desired by the students themselves, or in the case of children, by those responsible for them. These positions may be linked because knowledge needed to enter some desired occupation is often also knowledge that can be valued for itself as part of a liberal education. Pring draws on nineteenth and twentieth century history to explain that liberal education was traditionally:

about ‘improvement’ not about being useful. But it was also assumed that the educated and the cultivated person would *thereby* be useful. (2004, p. 43)

The popularity of Ken Robinson’s (2010) talk about the significance of ‘non-academic’, creative curriculum subjects in the production of educated individuals shows that this is not just of historical interest. He echoes nineteenth century arguments in assuming that such individuals are (economically) useful. Similarly, the first, narrowly instrumental, and third, more experiential, positions may be related. Somebody may learn something only for the experience of learning it and find that it has led to high status, wealth or power later on. Finally, the second, liberal, and third, more experiential, positions are linked, in that neither of them depends on a pre-determined process or outcome. Both the pleasures and purposes of education may be altered through the process of being and becoming educated. An example would be the possibilities inherent in inter-disciplinary or comparative studies, in which connections may be made which alter original conceptions of the components.

So far, the focus of the argument has been on the individual. The value accorded to education by a society follows the same pattern as the value it is accorded by individuals. Education always affects, and is affected by, the society in which it occurs. **Firstly**, it may apply in a narrowly instrumental sense: education is needed for the health of the economy. Governments believe that the success of their economy depends on the production of knowledgeable, skilful people. **Secondly**, it may apply in the wider sense that education is taken to be essential to the production of a just society. In this sense the educational proposals of Plato, Rousseau and Dewey are also production models of education (Martin, 1985) since all three philosophers were

interested in creating a just society and argued that its creation and maintenance required a specific kind of education. **Thirdly**, education may be valued for itself in a society, quite apart from its contribution to the overall shape of the society. It is not only that societies may need an educated public and educated rulers, or even that they may value having an educated population. What constitutes a good life is relevant for policy: What is economic prosperity meant to provide? What kind of society is wanted? How should education policy contribute to that? The recent controversy over the 2010 UK Browne Report on funding in Higher Education demonstrates that there are likely to be very different answers to these questions. There are certainly those who value formal institutions of Higher Education at least as much for their activities in the present than for future outcomes (e.g. see Collini, 2010).

## **(2) Social justice and education: the usual account**

Issues of social justice pervade formal education because both are concerned with values and the good life. Currently, social justice is discussed in terms of three analytically separable factors which are broadly ethical, not specifically educational. These factors can be distinguished analytically but each one overlaps with all the others in complex (non-additive) ways.

The factors are (1) distribution of goods, such as resources, status and power (2) ‘recognition’ of a person’s full humanity, regardless of differences such as religion or sexuality and (3) association in terms of patterns of social association. They apply to various social groups of people, depending on the particular time and place under consideration. This is the usual account of social justice and formal education. It is an account that I accept and, indeed, have had a hand in telling (Griffiths, 1998, 2003).

The three factors in social justice have not featured equally in philosophical discussions of justice. Distributive justice is the factor most often discussed. In the West, the discussion of social justice as distribution has been influenced by Aristotle’s discussion of justice and inequality (Aristotle, 1995) and, recently, by Rawls (Rawls, 1971). Rawls argues that:

Social and economic inequalities, for example inequalities of wealth and authority, are just only if they result in compensating benefits for everyone,

and in particular for the least advantaged members of society. (Rawls, 1971, pp. 14-15)

Secondly, 'recognition' as an issue of justice, is concerned with how persons are regarded by others. The idea can be traced back to Hegel ([1807] 1977) and more recently to Berlin (1969). Fraser (1997) provides a useful analysis. She explains the concept in the context of cultural or symbolic injustice:

Here injustice is rooted in social patterns of representation, interpretation, and communication. Examples include cultural domination...; nonrecognition (being rendered invisible by means of the...practices of one's culture); and disrespect. (Fraser, 1997, p. 14)

Finally, association, the third factor, refers to the way that access to power, influence, status and wealth is constrained by the social associations formed intentionally or otherwise. Consider the reasons that specific schools or universities are popular just because they provide membership of high status associations. Within a democratic society, as Young (2006) has argued, a just society requires that people can and do form creative, diverse and fluid associations. She is referring to adult civil society but the argument is also relevant within institutions of education (Gewirtz 2006; Griffiths and Ross, 2008).

Different social groups of people may suffer injustice of some or all of these kinds. The list of such groups is long and it varies over time and place. The most usually mentioned social groups in the context of Western education include gender, 'race', social class, sexuality and disability. These commonly feature in education policies along with a range of other differences, including religious, international, rural/city, settled/travelling/migrant and so on and on. As with the three factors in social justice, these social groups can be distinguished analytically but each one overlaps with all the others in complex, non-additive ways.

### **(3) Social justice in the present tense**

In relation to formal education, current accounts of social justice may refer to justice *from* education (outcomes) or justice *during* education (processes). Since injustice *from* education is focused on outcomes, it is necessarily associated with the instrumental or inherent reasons to value education. For instance, the focus may be on

the effects of achievement on access to jobs, or, equally, on the effects of non-recognition or association on the development of autonomy.

Accounts of injustice *during* education may focus on any of distribution, recognition or association. For instance, they may relate to the difficulties of distributing resources equally, depending on analyses of 'equality'. They may relate to the importance of lack of recognition as being what underlies bullying by teachers or by students. And they may relate to the significance of association (belonging) within particular social groups within the classroom as putting students into a 'double bind' with respect to students being able to 'feel themselves' within formal education (e.g. Archer, Hollingworth and Halsall, 2007). However, these considerations are general issues which are also found in other social institutions. They may also (as in the issue of belonging) affect self-cultivation and so pertain to the liberal value of education. But accounts of injustice in education rarely, if ever, focus on the lived experience of education as valuable in itself.

I suggest that the lack of focus on lived educational experiences indicates that there is a gap in our understanding of the extent of social justice issues within education. The following example of a concern about social justice illustrates what is at stake for the policy and practice of education. This example concerns attainment and social class. In 2005, Iannelli and Paterson pointed out some persisting inequalities, but the evidence is such that it can be used to question just what kind of injustice is perpetrated, if any. At first sight the answer seems clear. They say:

...in Scotland over the past half century...social class differences in educational attainment have not significantly reduced. (Iannelli & Paterson, 2005, p. 1)

But why do these inequalities matter? What is it that is so good about education that lack of it is an injustice? These questions arise when the full quotation is considered. With the omission included and italicized it reads:

*Educational attainment has increased* in Scotland over the past half century. *Nevertheless*, social class differences in educational attainment have not significantly reduced. (Iannelli & Paterson, 2005, p. 1)

In another publication from the same research project, the question is posed:



Is the value of education intrinsic, such that everyone may benefit from its expansion, or is it a positional good whose value declines if others possess more of it? (Raffe, Croxford, Iannelli, Shapira & Howieson, 2006, p. 1)

It is relevant for the argument of this paper that positional goods notably include instrumental outcomes of education, such as status, wealth and power – and accreditation is one route to all of these. So it may well be argued that distributive justice would require that attainment should be evenly distributed across class. Alternatively, it may be argued that distributive justice is served if social class disparity continues, but the least advantaged have benefited by their increased attainments. (See quotation from Rawls, above.) It is the nature of these benefits which is at issue here.

The question is more complex than it appears at first sight. The term ‘intrinsic’ is ambiguous, as has already been pointed out. Moreover, there are two possible interpretations of ‘everyone’ which may mean each person considered individually, or it may mean the society as a whole. Thus, ‘benefits’ are linked to the three analytically separable reasons for valuing education, explained earlier: instrumental, inherent or integral and may apply at individual or policy levels.

Consider first the question as it relates to an individual. Clearly, individuals will benefit if they participate in formal education which helps them realise their full potential while they also find a pleasure in their educational experiences. At the level of a society, extrinsic reasons are to the fore in policy documents. Governments value education for its contribution to the economy, being keen to improve their ranking in the global knowledge economy. But what about intrinsic goods? What benefits accrue to individuals and societies from the inherent or integral good of an education?

A brief look at policy documents is instructive. Scottish education policy appears clear that the value of education is more than instrumental. The purpose of the curriculum for schools is articulated in the *Curriculum for Excellence* as (Learning and Teaching Scotland, 2011):

The purpose of the curriculum is encapsulated in the four capacities - to enable each child or young person to be a successful learner, a confident individual, a responsible citizen and an effective contributor.

For Higher Education (HE) a 2011 policy document states:

Higher education in Scotland is the mainstay of our knowledge economy and serves the overall economic purpose of the nation at the highest levels. Yet it is not just about money; higher education in Scotland is a civilising force which has had a major influence on creating Scotland and Scottish society as it exists now...Higher education in Scotland is a vital component in a global knowledge community and the sector is also a major direct and indirect earner for Scotland in the world. Our universities have a key role to play in supporting the growth of our economy. They preserve and enhance civil society. (Smarter Scotland, 2011)

This mix of reasons is also to be seen in the influential Council of the European Union's resolution on lifelong learning which begins as follows:

Education and training are an indispensable means of promoting social cohesion, active citizenship, personal and professional fulfilment, adaptability and employability. Lifelong learning facilitates free mobility for European citizens and allows the achievement of the goals and aspirations of European Union countries (i.e. to become more prosperous, competitive, tolerant and democratic). It should enable all persons to acquire the necessary knowledge to take part as active citizens in the knowledge society and the labour market. (CEU, 2002)

Finally, an English Education policy document, *Excellence and Enjoyment*, states:

We want schools to continue to focus on raising standards while not being afraid to combine that with making learning fun. Our goal is for every primary school to combine excellence in teaching with enjoyment of learning. (DfES, 2003)

The statement can be read as valorising the significance of enjoyment as part of a good education. On the other hand, 'fun' has connotations of 'amusement', 'craic', 'devilment', 'distraction', 'diversion', 'entertainment', 'fling', 'frolic', 'merriment' and so forth. Yes, there should be a place for fun in school, but it is strange to consider it as descriptive of the more serious (though not necessarily solemn) 'enjoyment of learning'.

In all these policy statements the primacy of future outcomes on present experience is clear. Unsurprisingly there are many references to extrinsic reasons. The most

mentioned intrinsic ones refer to outcomes, as can be seen in phrases such as ‘responsible citizen’, ‘civil society’ and ‘social cohesion’. However there is a hint, possibly, of something else, something more integral. The ‘successful learner’ of the Curriculum for Excellence may be learning for the enjoyment of learning. The ‘personal fulfilment’ of the CEU can be interpreted as educational, especially as the topic is lifelong learning which has only recently been identified so closely with upskilling in response to the requirements of the economy. A focus on learning for its own sake is hardest to find in the Scottish HE policy (in the quotation and throughout the document).

I have pointed to the difficulty in ascertaining the existence of any acknowledgement in education policies of the role of educational experience as part of a good society, rather than as merely contributing to its conditions. However, if it is right that educational experience is itself worth having, then it appears that indeed the usual account of distributive social justice in education is too narrow. If educational experience is one aspect of living a good life, it too should be justly distributed. But this is impossible to articulate unless there is more clarity about what constitutes the good life and the role of policy in facilitating it: in particular, any part played by educational experience in that.

#### **(4) Exploring the possibilities of an integral good of education**

If current discussions of social justice are not currently focused on education as a good in itself, that is partly because this conception of education appears to be largely missing in the education research literature. Given this significant gap I want to explore how far education, formal education, is also a good in itself, part of what makes lives happy and valuable. In this section, I begin by considering some answers to what it is to live a good life, go on to make a start on exploring the part education has in that, using autobiographies, including my own, and draw some tentative conclusions, comparing them with recent research into enjoyment and engagement in formal education.

The question, ‘What is it to live a good life?’ is an ancient one. Aristotle provides a useful starting point because he examines the question in a number of his books (1995, 1998). His discussion is especially useful here because he considers (a) the

experience of a good life and (b) individuals in relation to a just society (in his case a city). He focuses on intellectual and moral good in a human life, called *eudaimonia*, variously translated as ‘joy’, ‘flourishing’, ‘well-being’ and, with some reservations, ‘happiness’. The various translations of *eudaimonia* indicate that it is not only good but also felt as good, as a pleasure. *Eudaimonia* comes from the sense that what one has is worth having, is desirable because it is good.

The joy of *eudaimonia* is not a transitory experience as are some pleasures. Pleasure is associated with it, but it is not to be confused with the more transitory pleasures, as Aristotle himself emphasised. While living a good life results in *eudaimonia*, experiences of amusement or fun are neither necessary nor sufficient for a life to be a good one. Because they are associated with ultimate values, it is the deeper pleasures that are significant, rather than ones which may facilitate a good life but which are not constitutive of it. Aristotle acknowledges the instrumental pleasures of wealth and the transitory pleasures of winning at sports, eating sweets, or the admiration of others. However *eudaimonia* comes from activities related to what is good in itself such as, Aristotle says, friendship, health, music and learning.

The individualism of Western culture means it is easy for us to conceive of joy, flourishing, well-being or happiness as individual experiences. But the link with the good, with virtue, undermines this perspective. Individuals experience these deeper pleasures, but they cannot be found in isolated individuals because *eudaimonia*, the good, is social. It is no accident that Aristotle’s discussion is located in his books on politics and the state. He says:

But the end of the city is not mere life: it is rather, a good quality of life. ... Similarly, it is not the end of the city to provide an alliance for mutual defence against all injury, nor does it exist for the purpose of exchange or [commercial] dealing... The conclusion which clearly follows...is that any city...must devote itself to the end of encouraging goodness. (Aristotle, 1995b, 1280<sup>a</sup>25)

And

The purpose of a city is the good life...a happy and truly valuable life. (Aristotle, 1995b, 1281<sup>a</sup>2)

Aristotle's understanding of *eudaimonia* is closely related to education. To summarise: to live a good life, to have *eudaimonia* is to exercise virtues. These virtues must include the use of reason, as well as being facilitated by luck, health, wealth, friendship and so forth. Goodness needs to be encouraged through the institutions of the State. Thus there is a close connection between education policy, the good life, and social justice. In a book on equality, education policy and teaching, Robin Richardson shows that this connection is still current:

Not that justice is an end in itself. Its purpose is to make the world safer for hope, love and rejoicing. Justice and joy: each is the ground and the fruit of the other. (Richardson, 1996, p. 20)

If education is claimed as a good in itself, as part of the good life, it needs to be clearer what is meant by that particular kind of good. As Arendt asks in a famous passage in *The Human Condition*:

How do we know what is good, where to find hope, love, rejoicing, joy?  
(Arendt, 1958, p. 5)

She goes on:

What I propose is very simple: it is nothing more than to think what we are doing. (Arendt, 1958, p. 5)

In short, if education is part of the good life, we educators should indeed be thinking what we are doing in education to find hope, love, rejoicing and joy.

### **(5) Thinking what we are doing to find hope, love, rejoicing, joy.**

Arendt's proposal may be very simple, but acting on it is difficult. In this section I begin an exploration of educational joys and delights, drawing on my own educational experiences together with some published experiences of others to identify occasions of joy in education<sup>1</sup> I go on to compare my provisional conclusions with recent research into enjoyment and engagement in formal education. Following Richardson and Arendt, I have used the word 'joy', which is close in many of its connotations with what is worth having. But joy is not a common word in discussions about education, and in English it sounds odd when applied to ordinary, pleasurable experiences which sometimes occur in formal education. However, there is no wholly satisfactory alternative. The term 'happy' is particularly unsatisfactory in the context of education because of its connotations with a pedagogy (wrongly associated with

child-centredness) which judges the success of a lesson by the smiling faces of the pupils, by the fun they had. This pedagogy is too reminiscent of the bread and circuses which are used as a substitute for social justice. On the other hand, terms such as ‘enjoyment’ and ‘engagement’ can be useful. As can delight, pleasure and elation, all of which can signify the idea that the source of the pleasure is something that is worth desiring because it is of value. However all of these words can also signify a range of other kinds of pleasures only contingently related to educational experiences.

I use memories to think about joy within formal education for teachers and pupils, but only when it is the result of *educational* experience. I would not want to suggest that it is all joy. It is not. Research on social justice in education shows this all too clearly. But here I am specifically not looking for despair, loneliness, misery, sadness, terror, sorrow, or any of the many other unhappinesses that can be found in our formal institutions of education. I think about ‘what I am (have been) doing’ as a teacher or student on occasions of educational joy.

I have found joy in pedagogical relationships with my students, whether children or adults. Indeed a short article I wrote after teaching some six year olds, having been away from the classroom for some years, shows this clearly. I recalled working closely with a child who found numbers very difficult. We spent day after day counting a variety of objects, adding them and then counting again. One morning she managed to count, add, and articulate what she had done. I could see that she had taken one step towards mathematical understanding. She could see that she had achieved something which was difficult and deemed significant. I wrote that we were both floating on air (Griffiths, 1990):

I had forgotten how the delight in teaching comes from these small – I should say, huge! – triumphs. Kelly’s progress in numbers; Jason’s new-found thrill in writing stories; Carrie’s discovery of the world of natural science.

This was not the relief of arrival after a difficult journey. We both knew it was a stage on the way to further mathematical work.

The pleasure of a pedagogical relationship is independent of the pleasures of spending time with young children. Similarly, it is independent of friendship though inevitably

I warm to some students more than others. More than one of my doctoral students were my friends before they were my students. All that is irrelevant to my elation when they have grasped something, discovered what it is to generate intellectual insights or discovered what it is to read critically: all difficult and worthwhile academic pursuits.

From the perspective of a learner there are analogous joys. However memories indicate that any joy in a pedagogical relationship takes second place to that of learning something difficult and worthwhile. One of my students wrote shortly after receiving her doctorate:

I did it all for the love of learning, for the love of philosophy, for the pulsating drive to understand and truly know my own thinking on so many difficult and challenging ideas in education. (Stagg-Jones, 2008, p. 2)

My own experience bears this out. I have been delighted when I have managed to learn something that I find difficult, and which I see as significant, whether or not I have any particular aptitude. I have written elsewhere of my continuing gratitude to two of my primary school teachers in relation to learning about justice, and also, progressing in mathematics and needlework (Griffiths, 2003). However, until I started reflecting about it as an adult, I had not realised how much I owed them. Joe Windle ascribes his own learning to ‘the college’ or to ‘the people I was on the course with’ (Griffiths, 2003, p. 20). Sometimes learning is seen as a pleasure in itself quite independently of teachers. Perry Taylor left school not wanting anything more to do with formal education. However he describes the pleasure he has had as an adult ‘being happy learning what I want to learn’ (Griffiths, 2003, p. 31). As a security officer he had many hours on his own with nothing much to do, so first he taught himself how to use the computer, then he used it to learn the guitar and a foreign language:

I don’t know what it is going to be next. If it is interesting it is worth doing. If it is not then it is just hard work...The line managers always try to send you on courses ‘Get yourself a paper for this. Get yourself a paper for that.’ I’m not interested. I’m going nowhere. I am quite happy here. (Griffiths, 2003, p. 31)

Students may remember their pedagogical relationship as insignificant in their learning, but nevertheless, it plainly matters. The relationship as remembered by both

students and teachers is intense. It is often described in terms of love and hate, fond memory or continuing anger. Rita Dobbins said that the teachers were snobbish about her poverty. 'My form teacher was an absolute cow....If I saw her on the street I would try and run her over' (Griffiths, 2003, p. 32). In contrast, Ghazala Bhatti describes teaching one of her undergraduate students, who had been out of formal education for eight years, working with single homeless men. She says, 'it was humbling to watch Mike struggle with written words' (Griffiths, 2003, p. 94). She describes her relief in his successful submission of his dissertation, and presents a letter he wrote thanking her for her help and expressing his enjoyment of research and his hope that he will be able to do some further study.

Another different, though related, joy for both teachers and students is what Hogan (2010) describes as entering a new imaginative neighbourhood. This is a kind of entrancement which is perceived and experienced as a continuing, unpredictable process of personal change as the neighbourhood is explored and opens out new possibilities. I have expressed this in abstract terms but some examples may show what I mean. I have already mentioned Perry who developed a view of himself as a musician and a linguist. The six year olds offer another example. I thought (rightly or wrongly) that Kelly had entered a new imaginative neighbourhood of numbers, Jason of story writing and Carrie of natural history. Mike discovered what it might be to find his voice within academic writing.

I have made some tentative suggestions about where such joy is to be found:

- Learning or teaching something that is both worthwhile and difficult – and likely not to be all fun.
- A pedagogical relationship: personal, intense and centred on students learning
- Entrancement: learning or teaching students to engage with new intellectual possibilities.
- Becoming: experiencing or instigating unpredictable, personal transformations.

Of course, it is entirely possible that these suggestions are wide of the mark. They are put forward only as a starting point.



Part of the reason that all this is tentative is the lack of research into specifically *educational* enjoyment. Recent research into enjoyment of education by Gorard and See (2011) examines students' views about their enjoyment of secondary school. However while they ask about enjoyment of learning, the variables in the model are largely about pedagogical preferences such as 'enough chance to discuss' or 'can work at my own pace'. All this is significant in terms of global enjoyment but not very illuminating about what is educationally valued. In an investigation into University students studying social science theory, Blunsdon, Reed and McNeil (2003) discriminate between entertainment and enjoyment which 'fosters learning' (p.44). However, the pleasurable elements of experience which foster learning they cite are at most obliquely related to inherent pleasure of education. For example, one of their 'elements of the learning experience' (p. 48) is presenting a database report rather than a conventional essay. These, like Gorard and See's variables are as likely to be strategic pedagogical preferences rather than educational experience in the integral sense of enjoyment. In another piece of recent research, Lumby (2011) follows Goetz, Hall, Frenzell and Pekrun (2006) in discriminating analytically between various kinds of enjoyment. Helpfully, he looks at experiences of enjoyable learning using group and individual interviews as the main source of evidence. These reveal a range of reasons for enjoying education of which the ones most directly related to integral educational experiences are: 'a loss of self-consciousness through absorption' (p. 259) and, more rarely, finding challenge in connection with learning. However pleasure in challenges was more often linked to behaviour or to schedules of submission for assessment. Relationships with teachers were not linked to less to learning, more to threat or care. Like Gorard and See, Lumby finds only a minority of pupils report enjoyment of any aspects of school, let alone of educational experiences of any kind.

Similar issues arise with recent research into school engagement. More conceptual clarity is needed before empirical research could be useful in identifying which forms of engagement pertain to integral purposes of education. Fredricks, Blumenfeld and Paris (2004) provide a useful overview, mainly from North American sources, where the majority of research into engagement is to be found. They distinguish behavioural (participation), emotional (belonging to a community, personal relationships) and cognitive engagement (deep and surface learning). The first is not my concern in this

article. However the sharp distinction drawn between the latter two unhelpfully obscures precisely the area which I have been discussing. The authors do not discuss the emotional engagement involved in cognitive engagement. Nor do they distinguish clearly between deep learning undertaken for long term instrumental ends and deep learning which is valued for itself. In an argument congruent with my own, Sheppard (2011) draws on Oakeshott's essay on educational engagement to argue for more attention to be paid to what she calls 'educational engagement' in contrast to the 'danse macabre' of engagement for extrinsic purposes. From a different perspective, though also one close to my own, Fielding (2006) draws on the philosophy of John Macmurray to offer insights into engagement as something which comes about through an enactment of educational relationships, which he is keen to distinguish from what he calls their simulacra. He describes the educational relationships as essentially about 'our being and becoming as persons', which is close to my own characterisations of pedagogical relationship and of becoming as continuing unpredictable personal transformation.

### **(5) Implications for education policy**

I conclude that the usual account of social justice is too narrow. I have argued that a socially just society aims to be one in which its members find a good life. I have also argued that educational experience is part of what it is to have a good life, at any age. Thus missing out on the integral worth of educational experience is an injustice. Therefore the framework used to analyse social justice in education needs to be adjusted to respond to all three values of education: integral, inherent and instrumental.

There are clear policy implications. The good life of education is not simply a matter of individuals, be they teachers or students. As argued earlier, a good life is one that is lived as part of a community, and is therefore a matter for policy makers. This is the reason that Robin Richardson grounds joy in justice (as quoted earlier). In other words policy makers are not only concerned with establishing a prosperous, cohesive society but also with enabling a good life for its citizens whatever their age and position. It is a thin conception of a good life which is entirely based on market choice and consumerism leading to those material pleasures that money or time can buy. A slightly thicker conception allows space for other pleasures of the kind mentioned by

Aristotle, but even then, education should at least provide some experience of the goods between which choice is to be made. For while much university education could be regarded this way, expensive in the same way that redecorating the house or a holiday might be, it is hard to see how anyone could make this choice without some idea of the integral worth of education. Implicit in this article is a thicker conception of a good life as one available to all its citizens, whatever their age or material possessions. In a democratic society, it is not the business of a policy maker to dictate what a good life is. However policies facilitate or impede the possibilities for thinner or thicker conceptions to be realized.

Education policies in the UK and the EU increasingly focus on marketised, neo-liberal versions of the value of education. More and more, the purpose of education is taken to be primarily economic and instrumental with only a small amount of attention paid to its intrinsic values (e.g. Morris, 2012, Hartley, 2006). Further, almost all allusions to intrinsic values are ambiguous about what is proposed and why. However, as I shall suggest in what follows, this ambiguity gives some grounds for cautious optimism .

In section 3, I drew attention to the *Curriculum for Excellence* in Scotland, *Excellence and Enjoyment* in England, and policy on lifelong learning in Europe. I suggested that the ‘successful learner’ of the *Curriculum for Excellence* might be interpreted as including learning for intrinsic, integral learning. The details of the document bear that out to some extent. The phrase has been operationalised through the Statements of Experiences and Outcomes which ‘describe national expectations of learning and progression’ (p. 4) for different curriculum areas throughout schooling. Right across the curriculum there are Statements which can easily be interpreted as educational pleasures. For example, the Expressive Arts section uses phrases such as ‘enables me to experience the inspiration and power of the arts’ (p. 59) and ‘I have experienced the energy and excitement of presenting/performing’ (p.60). The Literacy and English outcomes focus on ‘enjoyment and choice’ in sets of Statements which are a component of its subsections, ‘Listening and Talking’, ‘Reading’ and ‘Writing’. The Statements of Mathematics encourage learning and teaching approaches that challenge and stimulate children and young people and promote their enjoyment of mathematics’ (p. 189), based on the view that, ‘Because mathematics is rich and

stimulating it engages and stimulates learners of all ages, interests and abilities.’ (p. 189). The Science Statements state that ‘learning in the sciences will enable me to develop curiosity and understanding’ (p. 259) and for example, in relation to the topic, Planet Earth, ‘I have experienced the wonder of looking at the vastness of the sky’ (p. 264).

There may be less space for joy in English education policy. Both Alexander (2004) and Hartley (2006) show that the reference to fun in *Excellence and Enjoyment* (2004) does not signify the enjoyment of intrinsic values of education: neither inherent nor integral, as I have termed them. As Hartley argues, “‘excellence’ associates with a producer ethic; ‘enjoyment’ with a consumer ethic’ (p. 12). The enjoyment, he argues, is one which is harnessed for instrumental reasons to improve standards. However at least there was some space for subversion here by schools which ascribed integral values to education. Even that space has now gone<sup>2</sup>. Current policy documents do not advocate enjoyment either in their advice on teaching, nor in their statements of the aims of education. (White paper 2010) So perhaps it is not surprising to find that ‘A majority of students nearing the end of their compulsory schooling do not enjoy education’ (Gorard and See, 2011, p. 675).

European policy on Lifelong learning is also becoming more extrinsically focused, LL as can be seen in the Commission’s Communication about the 2005 refocusing of the Lisbon strategy. While social and environmental objectives remain in the rhetoric, personal fulfilment has not):

Making growth and jobs the immediate target goes hand in hand with promoting social or environmental objectives. The Lisbon Strategy is an essential component of the overarching objective of sustainable development set out in the Treaty: improving welfare and living conditions in a sustainable way for present and future generations. (European Commission, 2005)

By 2011, in the new Europe 2020 framework, extrinsic, economic aims had gained even more dominance

EU education and training policies have gained impetus since the adoption of the Lisbon Strategy in 2000, the EU's overarching programme focusing on growth and jobs. The strategy recognised that knowledge, and the innovation it sparks, are the EU's most valuable assets, particularly in light of increasing

global competition....the key to employment, economic success and allowing people to participate fully in society. (European Commission, 2011)

In this third formulation social goals of education ('equity, social cohesion and active citizenship') are almost a by-product of the economic ones.

However, even in this climate there is space for local manoeuvre within Europe in the process of interpretation by more local education policies to reinterpret policy.

Precisely in relation to lifelong learning and training, Scottish policy includes enough ambiguity to allow for an interpretation which includes integral values. The National Indicator for adult literacy and numeracy states:

Literacy and numeracy are basic skills without which an individual's capacity to undertake other learning and training is severely limited. They are also critical to developing people's qualities of resilience and adaptability, along with the ability to go on learning and developing throughout their lives. Equipped in this way, people are more likely to maintain and enhance the health and wellbeing of themselves and their family. They are also more likely to adapt and improve skills, get a job and stay in productive employment. (Scotland Performs, 2011)

<http://scotland.gov.uk/About/scotPerforms/indicators/literacyAndNumeracy>

Literacy and numeracy appear to have some values for themselves as well as equipping them to get jobs.

The work of advocating for integral values of education and securing them in national and local policies would be easier if there was a clearer understanding of what is at stake. This article is intended as a contribution to that process. Clearly there is more work to be done in clarifying the concepts the better to advocate for them, so that policy makers are encouraged to mention them in national policies, alongside other education values. At the same time the social justice implications need to be better understood. Empirical evidence would help in ascertaining the current distribution of educational enjoyment, and the role played by issues of recognition and association. Interestingly, Gorard and See (2011) suggest that equal distribution of enjoyment of education may be of less significance as the overall lack of it, at least in England. Such research would in itself be a contribution to affirming how and why education is valuable in its own right. It would also contribute to a wider appreciation of the

significance of integral value of education for everyone, not just the lucky few. In other words, social justice will be better served when joy and justice *in*, as well as *from* education are better established.

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## Notes

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<sup>1</sup> Almost all the other people who figure in these autobiographies have given permission for their real names to be used. The six-year olds (who are now adults) and Jenny, are anonymised. I am no longer in touch with any of them.

<sup>2</sup> The document is no longer accessible on the government website.